

tremendous problems that have strained State and local capabilities. The result is that many of our citizens simply are not getting the help they need, especially in New Orleans. And that is unacceptable.

During my visit I discussed these problems at length with Governor Riley of Alabama, Governor Barbour of Mississippi, Governor Blanco of Louisiana, and Mayor Nagin of New Orleans. Each State will have its own set of challenges and issues to solve. Yet all of us agree that more can be done to improve our ability to restore order and deliver relief in a timely and effective manner.

This morning I received a briefing on the latest developments on the ground. Right now there are more than 21,000 National Guard troops operating in Louisiana and Mississippi, and more are on the way. More than 13,000 of these troops are in Louisiana. The main priority is to restore and maintain law and order and assist in recovery and evacuation efforts. In addition to these National Guard forces, the Department of Defense has deployed more than 4,000 active duty forces to assist in search and recovery and provide logistical and medical support.

Hour by hour, the situation on the ground is improving. Yet the enormity of the task requires more resources and more troops. Today I ordered the Department of Defense to deploy additional active duty forces to the region. Over the next 24 to 72 hours, more than 7,000 additional troops from the 82d Airborne, from the 1st Cavalry, the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, and the 2d Marine Expeditionary Force will arrive in the affected areas. These forces will be on the ground and operating under the direct command of General Russ Honore.

Our priorities are clear: We will complete the evacuation as quickly and safely as possible. We will not let criminals prey on the vulnerable, and we will not allow bureaucracy to get in the way of saving lives.

Yesterday I also signed a \$10.5 billion emergency aid package to fund our ongoing relief efforts. This is a downpayment on what will be a sustained Federal commitment to our fellow citizens along the Gulf Coast. I want to thank the Congress for their quick, bipartisan action, and I look forward to working with them in the days and weeks ahead.

I know that those of you who have been hit hard by Katrina are suffering. Many are angry and desperate for help. The tasks before us are enormous, but so is the heart of America. In America, we do not abandon our fellow citizens in their hour of need. And the Federal Government will do its part. Where our response is not working, we'll make it right. Where our response is working, we will duplicate it. We have a responsibility to our brothers and sisters all along the Gulf Coast, and we will not rest until we get this right and the job is done.

This week we've all been humbled by the awesome powers of Mother Nature. And when you stand on the porch steps where a home once stood, or look at row upon row of buildings that are completely under water, it's hard to imagine a bright future. But when you talk to the proud folks in the area, you see a spirit that cannot be broken.

The emergency along the Gulf Coast is ongoing. There's still a lot of difficult work ahead. All Americans can be certain our Nation has the character, the resources, and the resolve to overcome this disaster. We will comfort and care for the victims. We will restore the towns and neighborhoods that have been lost in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. We will rebuild the great city of New Orleans. And we will once again show the world that the worst adversities bring out the best in America.

May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his address, he referred to Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; and Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on the Death of Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist *September 4, 2005*

Our Nation is saddened today by the news that Chief Justice William Rehnquist passed

away last night. Laura and I send our respect and deepest sympathy to this good man's children, Jim, Janet, and Nancy. We send our respect to all the members of the Rehnquist family.

William H. Rehnquist was born and raised in Wisconsin. He was the grandson of Swedish immigrants. Like so many of his generation, he served in the Army during World War II. He went on to college with the help of the GI bill. He studied law at Stanford University. He graduated first in his class, that included his future colleague, Sandra Day O'Connor. Judge Rehnquist and his late wife, Nan, raised their family in Phoenix, where he built a career as one of Arizona's leading attorneys. He went on to even greater distinction in public service as an Assistant U.S. Attorney General, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and for the past 19 years, Chief Justice of the United States.

He was extremely well respected for his powerful intellect. He was respected for his deep commitment to the rule of law and his profound devotion to duty. He provided superb leadership for the Federal court system, improving the delivery of justice for the American people and earning the admiration of his colleagues throughout the judiciary.

Even during a period of illness, Chief Justice Rehnquist stayed on the job to complete the work of his final Supreme Court term. I was honored, and I was deeply touched when he came to the Capitol for the swearing-in last January. He was a man of character and dedication. His departure represents a great loss for the Court and for our country.

There are now two vacancies on the Supreme Court, and it will serve the best interests of the Nation to fill those vacancies promptly. I will choose in a timely manner a highly qualified nominee to succeed Chief Justice Rehnquist. As we look to the future of the Supreme Court, citizens of this Nation can also look with pride and appreciation on the career of our late Chief Justice.

More than half a century has passed since William H. Rehnquist first came to the Supreme Court as a young law clerk. All of his years, William Rehnquist revered the Constitution and laws of the United States. He led the judicial branch of Government with

tremendous wisdom and skill. He honored America with a lifetime of service, and America will honor his memory.

May God bless the Rehnquist family. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Proclamation 7922—Death of William H. Rehnquist

September 4, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As a mark of respect for William H. Rehnquist, Chief Justice of the United States, I hereby order, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, including section 7 of title 4, United States Code, that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff at the White House and on all public buildings and grounds, at all military posts and naval stations, and on all naval vessels of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions until sunset, Tuesday, September 13, 2005. I also direct that the flag shall be flown at half-staff for the same period at all United States embassies, legations, consular offices, and other facilities abroad, including all military facilities and naval vessels and stations.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 8, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 9.